

TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE
Transcriber's Office
FLOOR DEBATE

April 28, 2003

LB 724

provide input and direction to the Health and Human Services Committee of the Legislature." It goes on to enumerate them: representatives of law enforcement from each community affected by a possible closure of a regional center; a mayor or a city administrator from each community, same thing; one representative from a hospital or emergency service provider from each community affected by possible closure of a regional center; one health care professional from each of the regional centers; one state employee collective bargaining representative, and I'm going to come back to this one, from each of the regional centers; one family member of a person receiving direct services from each of the regional centers; one regional program administrator from each of the behavioral health areas affected. I'm talking here about the six mental health areas. It's the intent of the Legislature that no implementing legislation be introduced pursuant to the act until a detailed plan is developed and approved by the Governor, the Health and Human Services Committee, and the Department of Health and Human Services. Such plan shall include the following issues: development of specific services and where each service shall be located; the funding of the new services; the staffing of the new services; the administrative authority for the provision of mental health services. It closes by saying it is the intent of the Legislature that all community-based services shall be in place and have the capacity to accept all patients before any consideration is given to downsizing, consolidating, or eliminating any current services provided by the regional center. Some will say, oh, well, they want to drag this thing out. No, we want to provide parallel services. If you don't have a parallel service to provide, and incidentally that does mean that you're going to have double or something more than 100 percent of the expense over time because you're not going to move right up, bang, stop one set of services, bang, begin another set of services. You're going to have to phase one group out and another group in. All the people located here, or designated here, by this amendment have a couple of things. Number one, they have a stake in the game. And it's one thing to hear people at a committee meeting come in and testify; it's another to have meetings with them where specific plans are discussed and debated, even though those plans have to be adopted, coordinated, and then approved by a